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REMARKS

Claims 1-32, 36-45, and 48-55 are pending in the present Application. Claims 1-32, 36-37, 43-50, and 55 have been cancelled in an effort to advance prosecution, Claims 38-41, and 51 have been amended, and Claims 56-67 have been added, leaving Claims 38-42, 51-54, and 56-67 for consideration upon entry of the present Amendment.

With regard to the amendment to Claim 41, the claim has been amended merely to change the dependency of the claim.

Support for the amendment to Claims 38-40, 51, and for new Claims 59-66 can at least be found in the specification in the paragraph beginning at line 13 of page 5 and ending at line 5 of page 6.

Support for new Claims 56-58 can at least be found in original Claim 6.

Support for new Claim 67 can at least be found in the specification in Table I and Table II on pages 8 to 9.

Applicants respectfully request that these amendments be entered because they 1) do not raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search; 2) they do not raise issue of new matter; 3) new claims 56-67 depend from allowable claims; and 4) the amendments place the case in a better condition for allowance.

The Specification has been amended as explained in detail below. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Reconsideration and allowance of the entire case is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Specification

In Applicants' Amendment dated January 21, 2004, Applicants amended the specification in the paragraph beginning at line 13 of page 5 and ending at line 5 of page 6. After carefully reviewing the specification in light of the Examiner's comments, Applicants have withdrawn those amendments from the January 21st Amendment. The current amendments made to this paragraph place the paragraph in the same condition as when filed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this amendment be entered.

Additionally, Applicants have amended the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 17 and ending at line 28 for clarity in light of the Examiner's comments. More particularly, Applicants

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have amended the specification to correspond with the description in the paragraph beginning at line 13 of page 5 and ending at line 5 of page 6.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

Claims 1-32, 36-45, and 48-55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the Specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in relevant art that the inventors, at the time the s was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

With regard to Claims 1-32, 36-37, 43-45, and 55, this rejection is moot, as those claims have been canceled.

With regard to independent Claims 38 and 51, Applicants have amended the claims to specify that the percentage of monoclinic phase be based on a total weight of the zirconia.

With regard to independent Claim 42, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider this rejection, as the claim does not comprise the limitation specifying the percentage of monoclinic phase.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 38-42, and 51-54 and allow the entire case.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 4, 6-18, 20-22, 25-32, 36, 37, 43-50, and 55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,258,233 to Sugiyama et al. in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0006139 A1 to Noda et al.

Claims 2, 3, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,258,233 to Sugiyama et al. in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0006139 A1 to Noda et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,968,673 to Aizawa et al.

Claims 5 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,258,233 to Sugiyama et al. in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0006139 A1 to Noda et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,897,174 to Wang et al.

These rejections are moot, as Claims 1-32, 36-37, 43-45, 48-50, and 55 have been cancelled.

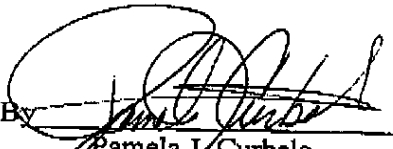
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It is believed that the foregoing amendments and remarks fully comply with the Office Action and that the claims herein should now be allowable to Applicants. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance is requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

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